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ABSTRACT

The Community Profiles Project uses data from the 1990 U.S. Census to describe some of the population characteristics of Asian Pacific Americans in selected Massachusetts cities and towns. The profiles include basic statistics relating to income, employment, education, and housing. This information can assist policy makers and practitioners in developing programs and policies affecting Asian Pacific Americans that are appropriate, sensitive, and effective. This profile focuses on Cambridge. The 8,176 Asian Pacific Americans recorded as living in Cambridge represented 8.5% of the city's residents, an increase of 25% from the 1980 Census. Chinese accounted for nearly one-half of this group. nearly one-half of the Asian Pacific Americans over 65 years of age were not proficient in English, but only about 20% of those aged 5 to 17 years were not proficient. Household incomes of Asian Pacific Americans in Cambridge reflected wide disparities. The percentage of Asian Pacific Americans in the lowest income category was nearly two and one-half times that of Whites and nearly twice as large as Blacks and Latinos, and the percentage of Asian Pacific Americans in the highest income categories was much less than one-half that of Whites and comparable to that of Blacks and Latinos. Employment figures were consistent with income figures. About 60% of the Asian Pacific Americans in Cambridge were enrolled in school. This was, by a considerable margin, the highest percentage of school enrollment of any racial and ethnic group in the city. The proportion of the group enrolled in elementary through college was particularly high. When Asian Pacific Americans over 25 were considered, a considerably lower percentage than that of Whites had a ninth-grade education, while a significantly higher percentage had secured graduate or professional degrees compared with all other groups and the total population. These findings reflect the diversity of Asian Pacific Americans in Cambridge. (Contains nine figures and eight tables.) (SLD)

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Community Profiles in Massachusetts

Institute for Asian American Studies · UMass Boston

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COMMUNITY PROFILES IN MASSACHUSETTS

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS *in Cambridge*

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The Community Profiles Project utilizes data drawn from the 1990 U.S. Census to describe some of the population characteristics of Asian Pacific Americans in selected Massachusetts cities and towns. The profiles include basic statistics relating to income, employment, education, and housing. This information can assist policymakers and practitioners in developing programs and constructing policies affecting Asian Pacific Americans that are appropriate, sensitive, and effective.

The Institute for Asian American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston brings together resources and expertise from both the campus and community to conduct research on Asian Pacific American issues, to expand Asian American studies in the curriculum, and to support community development initiatives in Asian Pacific American communities in Massachusetts.

Project Staff: Project director: Paul Watanabe. Principal researchers: Carlton Sagara and Joanne Chow. Design and Production: Shauna Lo and Marilyn Wu.

Support provided by: The Boston Foundation.

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I. Population Characteristics

Table 1. Population by Race*

White	71,988
Black	13,013
Asian Pacific American	8,176
Other	2,286
Native American	339
TOTAL	95,802

*Latinos may be of any race

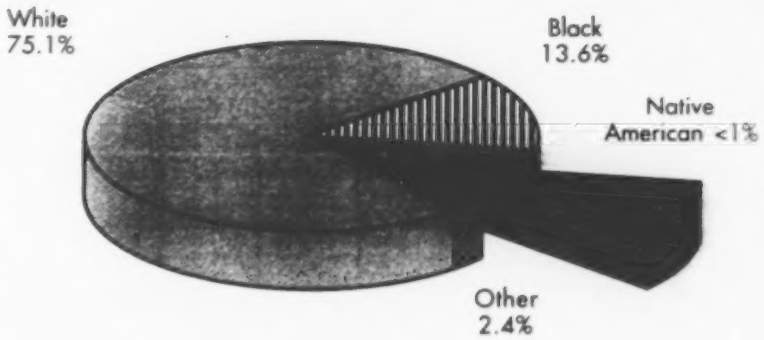


Figure 1

• The 8,176 Asian Pacific Americans recorded in the 1990 U.S. Census as living in Cambridge (Table 1) accounted for 8.5% of the city's residents (Figure 1). This figure represents an increase of 225% since the 1980 U.S. Census.

• Chinese accounted for nearly one-half of the Asian Pacific American population (Table 2). Koreans, Asian Indians, and Japanese were also well represented in Cambridge.

- The Asian Pacific American population was nearly equally divided between females and males overall and in most age groups (Figure 2).
- The Asian Pacific American population was relatively young, and the college-age population was particularly large (Figure 2).
- Dramatic differences were found in the English language proficiency of older and younger Asian Pacific Americans (Figure 3). Among those 65 years old and over, for example, nearly one-half were not proficient in English. For individuals 5 to 17 years old, slightly over 20% were not proficient.

Table 2. Ancestry of Asian Pacific Americans

Chinese	3,802	46.5%
Korean	1,443	17.6%
Asian Indian	1,309	16.0%
Japanese	742	9.1%
Filipino	176	2.2%
Vietnamese	128	1.6%
Thai	90	1.1%
Cambodian	9	0.1%
Hmong	0	0.0%
Laotian	0	0.0%
Other Asian	443	5.4%
Hawaiian	27	0.3%
Samoan	0	0.0%
Tongan	0	0.0%
Other Polynesian	0	0.0%
Guamanian	0	0.0%
Other Micronesian	0	0.0%
Melanesian	0	0.0%
Other Pacific Islander	7	0.1%
TOTAL	8,176	100.0%

Figure 2. Asian Pacific Americans by Sex and Age

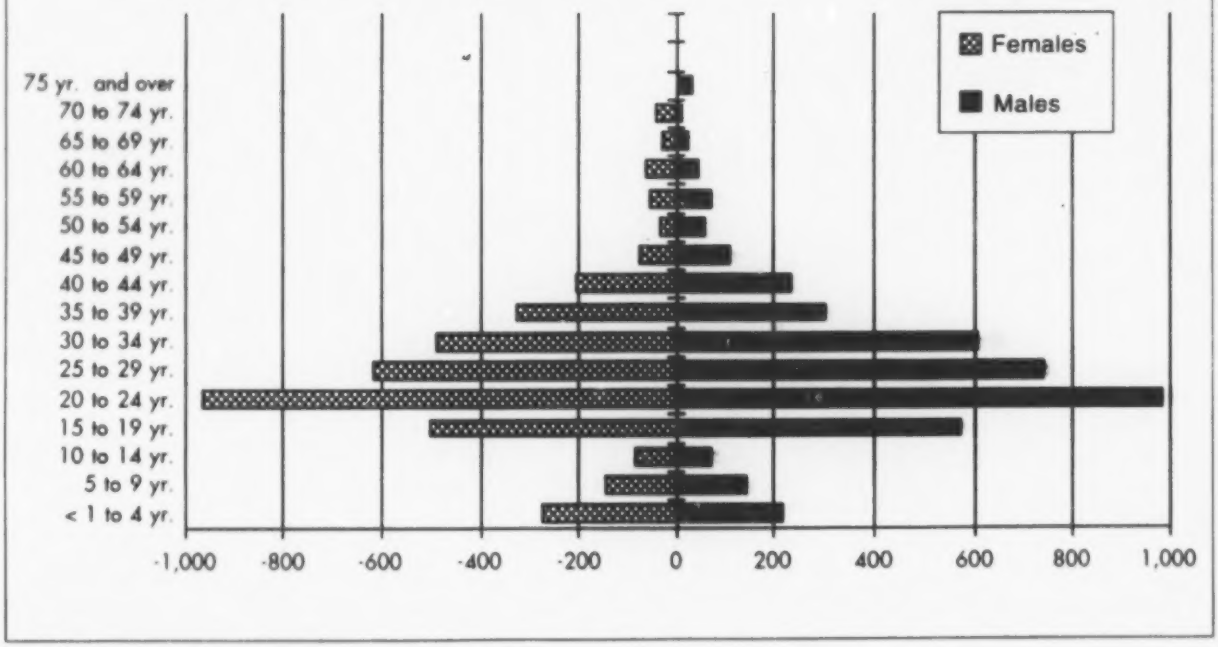
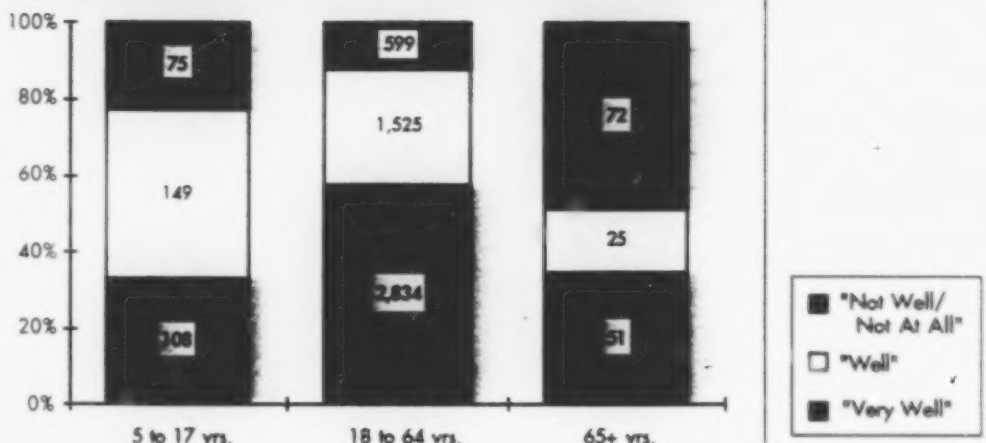


Figure 3. English Proficiency Among Asian Pacific Americans



II. Income

Table 3. Household Income by Race and Ethnicity

	APA	White	Black	Nat. Am.	Other	Latino*	TOTAL
Less than $5,000	240	1,427	280	27	23	98	1,997
	11.3%	4.4%	6.4%	15.4%	4.2%	5.5%	5.1%
$5,000 to $9,999	138	2,470	512	31	81	188	3,232
	6.5%	7.7%	11.6%	17.7%	14.7%	10.5%	8.2%
$10,000 to $14,999	153	2,383	440	21	42	219	3,039
	7.2%	7.4%	10.0%	12.0%	7.6%	12.2%	7.7%
$15,000 to $24,999	416	4,520	1,135	30	94	349	6,195
	19.7%	14.1%	25.7%	17.1%	17.0%	19.5%	15.7%
$25,000 to $34,999	385	4,898	730	29	90	297	6,132
	18.2%	15.3%	16.6%	16.6%	16.3%	16.6%	15.6%
$35,000 to $49,999	329	5,428	664	6	152	322	6,579
	15.5%	16.9%	15.1%	3.4%	27.5%	18.0%	16.7%
$50,000 to $74,999	308	5,727	398	15	49	193	6,497
	14.6%	17.8%	9.0%	8.6%	8.9%	10.8%	16.5%
$75,000 to $99,999	66	2,339	192	0	14	81	2,611
	3.1%	7.3%	4.4%	0.0%	2.5%	4.5%	6.6%
$100,000 or more	81	2,893	58	16	7	43	3,055
	3.8%	9.0%	1.3%	9.1%	1.3%	2.4%	7.8%
TOTAL	2,116	32,085	4,409	175	552	1,790	39,337
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Latinos may be of any race

- Household incomes of Asian Pacific Americans reflected some wide disparities (Table 3). For example, the percentage of Asian Pacific Americans in the lowest income category (those making less than $5,000) was nearly two and one-half times larger than that of whites and nearly twice as large as that of Blacks and Latinos. The percentage of Asian Pacific Americans in the two highest categories (those making over $75,000) was much less than one-half that of whites and comparable to that of Blacks and Latinos.
- The percentage of Asian Pacific American household incomes in the lowest income category (less than $5,000) was over twice as large as that of the total population. In every income group beyond $35,000, the percentage of Asian Pacific Americans trailed the total population (Figure 4).
- The per capita income of Asian Pacific Americans was less than one-half that of whites (Figure 5), and was slightly higher than that of Blacks and Latinos.

Figure 4. Household Income for Asian Pacific Americans and Total Population

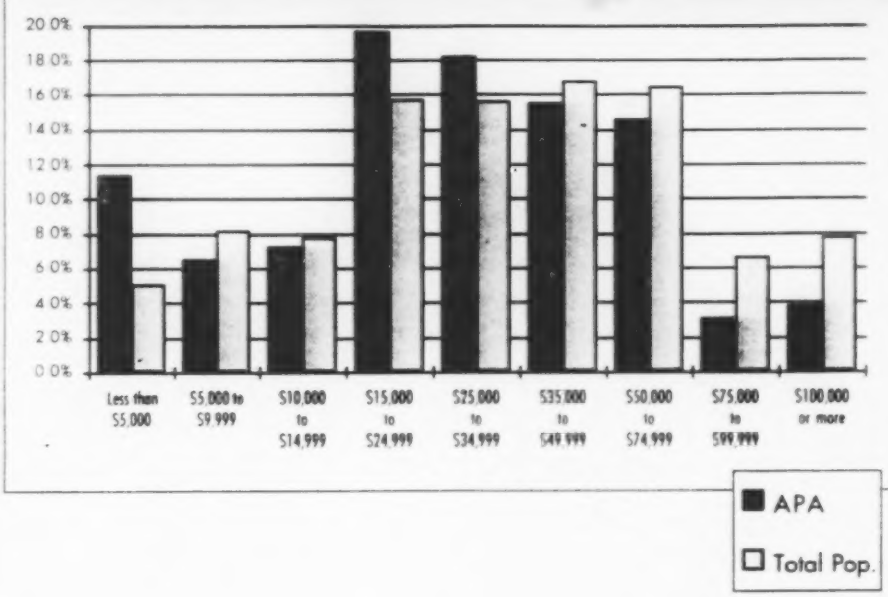


Figure 5. Per Capita Income by Race and Ethnicity

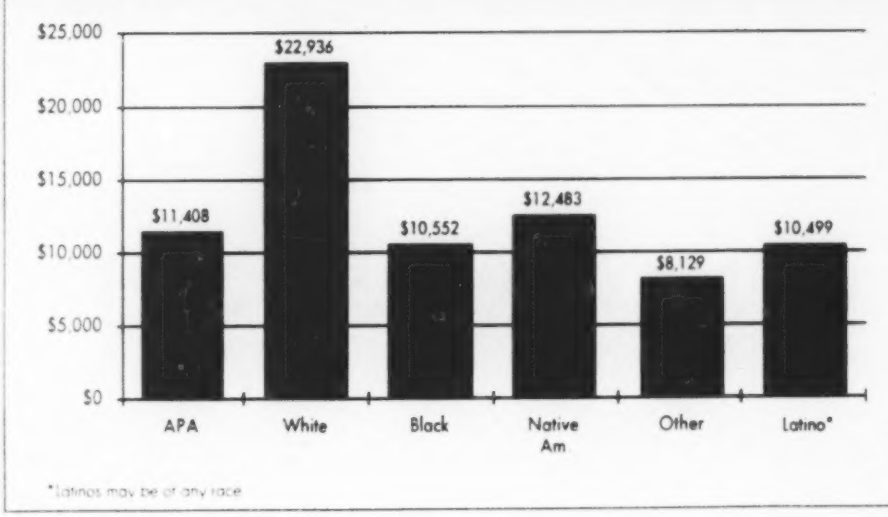


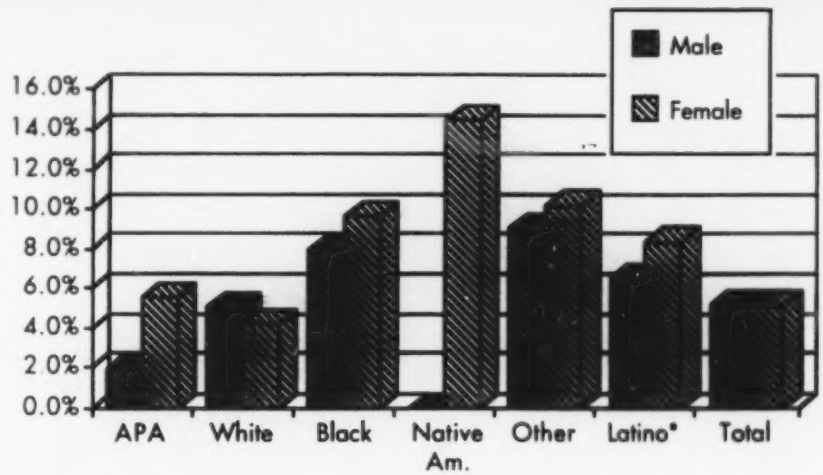
Table 4. Poverty Status by Age by Race and Ethnicity

	APA	White	Black	Nat. Am	Other	Latino*	TOTAL
Under 5 years	86	266	242	0	50	94	644
	7.4%	5.1%	12.1%	0.0%	12.9%	9.6%	7.3%
5 years	0	56	73	0	10	32	139
	0.0%	1.1%	3.7%	0.0%	2.6%	3.3%	1.6%
6 to 11 years	49	273	286	13	68	161	689
	4.2%	5.3%	14.3%	22.0%	17.5%	16.4%	7.8%
12 to 17 years	61	206	240	0	21	89	528
	5.2%	4.0%	12.0%	0.0%	5.4%	9.1%	6.0%
18 to 64 years	942	3,567	1,037	35	239	582	5,820
	80.7%	68.9%	51.9%	59.3%	61.6%	59.3%	66.2%
65 to 74 years	24	372	74	0	0	17	470
	2.1%	7.2%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	5.3%
75 years and over	5	440	48	11	0	7	504
	0.4%	8.5%	2.4%	18.6%	0.0%	0.7%	5.7%
TOTAL	1,167	5,180	2,000	59	388	982	8,794
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Latinos may be of any race

III. Employment

Figure 6. Unemployment Rate By Sex, Race and Ethnicity



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• A larger percentage of Asian Pacific Americans less than 18 years old lived in poverty compared with whites in the same age group (Table 4). Asian Pacific Americans over 65 years old, in contrast, constituted a much smaller percentage of those in poverty compared with whites (Table 4).

• Asian Pacific American unemployment rates were less than those for whites and the total population (Figure 6).

• Asian Pacific Americans had lower labor force participation rates than whites, Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, and the total population (Table 5).

Table 5. Labor Force Attachment for Persons 16 Years and Older by Race and Ethnicity

	APA	White	Black	Nat. Am.	Other	Latino*	TOTAL
Males	3,803	31,002	4,569	162	797	2,399	40,333
In Armed Forces	11	78	24	0	0	0	113
Civilian: Employed	2,222	21,115	3,142	102	515	1,544	27,096
Civilian: Unemployed	45	1,121	272	0	51	108	1,489
Not in labor force	1,525	8,688	1,131	60	231	747	11,635
Male Unempl. Rate#	2.0%	5.0%	8.0%	0.0%	9.0%	6.5%	5.2%
Participation Rate@	59.8%	71.9%	75.1%	63.0%	71.0%	68.9%	71.1%
Females	3,400	33,653	5,294	141	899	2,250	43,387
In Armed Forces	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Civilian: Employed	1,756	21,386	3,243	77	539	1,379	27,001
Civilian: Unemployed	103	929	346	13	61	126	1,452
Not in labor force	1,541	11,338	1,705	51	299	745	14,934
Female Unempl. Rate#	5.5%	4.2%	9.6%	14.4%	10.2%	8.4%	5.1%
Participation Rate@	54.7%	66.3%	67.8%	63.8%	66.7%	66.9%	65.6%

Unempl. Rate = (Civilian Unempl.)/(Civilian Empl. + Civilian Unempl.)
@ Participation Rate=(Civilian Employed+Civilian Unempl.)/(Civilian Empl.+Civilian Unempl.+Not in Labor Force)

*Latinos may be of any race

IV. Education

Table 6. School Enrollment of Persons 3 Years and Older by Race and Ethnicity

	APA	White	Black	Nat. Am.	Other	Latino*	TOTAL
In Preprimary School	102	759	290	9	39	102	1,199
	1.3%	1.1%	2.3%	2.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.3%
Elem. or High School	563	4,975	2,606	33	426	1,097	8,603
	7.2%	7.1%	20.9%	9.9%	19.7%	19.0%	9.3%
Enrolled in College	4,064	16,956	2,619	96	629	1,773	24,364
	51.7%	24.2%	21.0%	28.7%	29.1%	30.6%	26.3%
Not Enrolled in School	3,134	47,291	6,949	196	1,067	2,815	58,637
	39.9%	67.6%	55.8%	58.7%	49.4%	48.6%	63.2%
TOTAL	7,863	69,981	12,464	334	2,161	5,787	92,803
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Latinos may be of any race

Figure 7. Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older for Asian Pacific Americans and Total Population

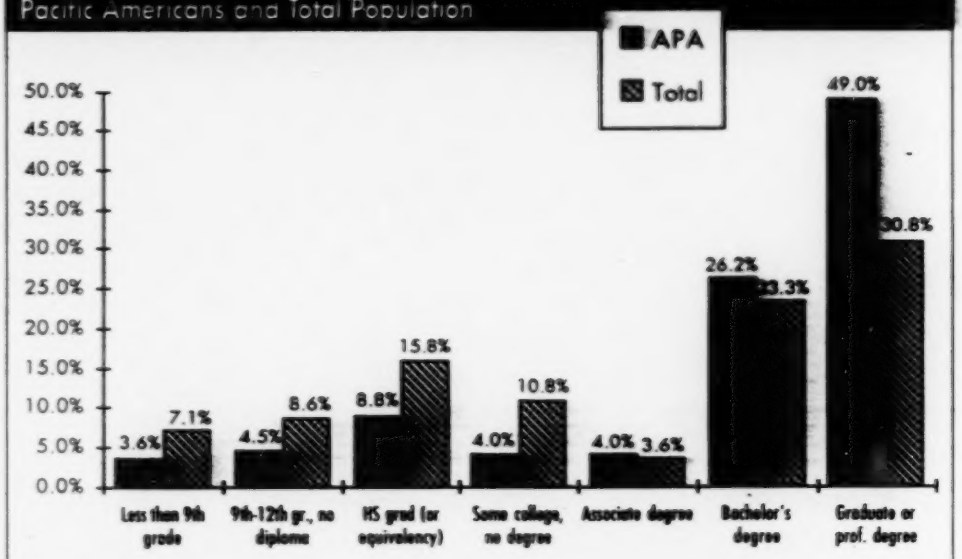


Table 7. Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older by Race and Ethnicity

	APA	White	Black	Nat. Am.	Other	Latino*	TOTAL
Less than 9th grade	151	3,349	727	32	242	552	4,501
	3.6%	6.6%	9.9%	14.7%	22.5%	17.3%	7.1%
9th-12th gr., no diploma	189	3,870	1,172	20	179	367	5,430
	4.5%	7.6%	16.0%	9.2%	16.6%	11.5%	8.6%
HS grad (or equivalency)	368	7,526	1,915	23	225	571	10,057
	8.8%	14.9%	26.1%	10.6%	20.9%	17.9%	15.8%
Some college, no degree	167	5,133	1,294	68	163	467	6,825
	4.0%	10.1%	17.7%	31.2%	15.1%	14.6%	10.8%
Associate degree	168	1,616	426	15	48	126	2,273
	4.0%	3.2%	5.8%	6.9%	4.5%	3.9%	3.6%
Bachelor's degree	1,099	12,598	984	20	118	509	14,819
	26.2%	24.9%	13.4%	9.2%	11.0%	16.0%	23.3%
Graduate or prof. degree	2,056	16,563	806	40	101	599	19,566
	49.0%	32.7%	11.0%	18.3%	9.4%	18.8%	30.8%
TOTAL	4,198	50,655	7,324	218	1,076	3,191	63,471
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Latinos may be of any race

- About 60% of all Asian Pacific Americans were enrolled in school (Table 6). By a considerable margin, this was the highest percentage of school enrollment of any racial and ethnic group.
- The proportion of the group enrolled in elementary through college was particularly high, 59% for Asian Pacific Americans compared with 31% for whites and 36% for the total population (Table 6).
- The educational attainments of Asian Pacific Americans over 25 years old departed from those of the total population at several levels (Table 7 and Figure 7). For example, a considerably lower percentage of Asian Pacific Americans had less than a 9th grade education. A significantly higher proportion of Asian Pacific Americans had secured graduate or professional degrees compared with all other groups and the total population.

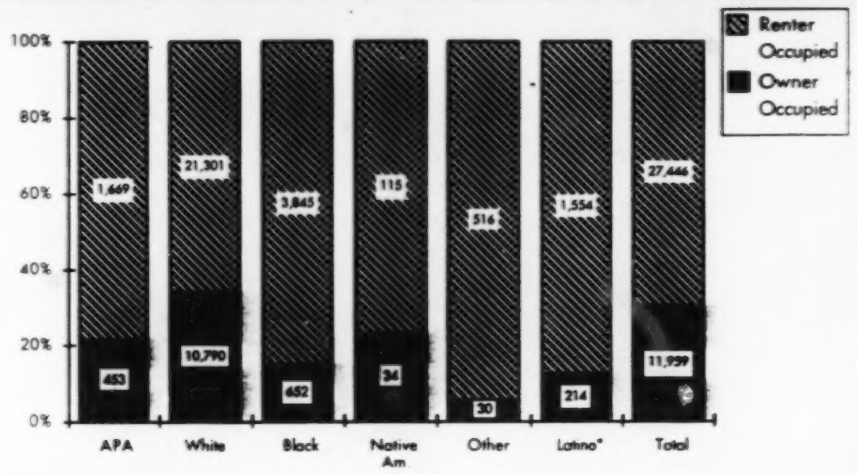
V. Housing

- The owner-occupancy rate for Asian Pacific Americans like those of other non-whites trailed rates for whites and the total population (Figure 8).
- The proportion of Asian Pacific Americans who paid rents $300 and over is the highest of any group (Table 8 and Figure 9).

LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA

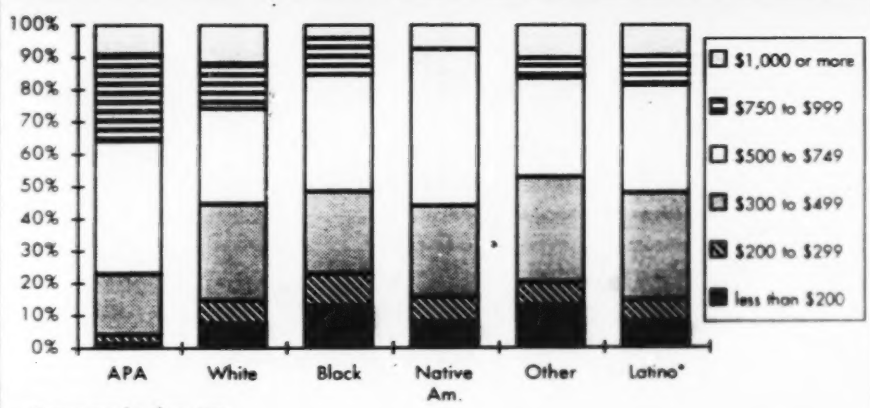
The 1990 U.S. Census data allows for the examination of the situation of Asian Pacific Americans and provides the most comprehensive available information on this group. The data, however, does have some limitations. Linguistic, cultural, and other barriers contributed to an undercounting of Asian Pacific Americans in the 1990 Census. Furthermore, by aggregating Asian Pacific Americans together, differences between nationalities were often muted. Errors in coding also limited the reliability of some data on Asian Pacific Americans.

Figure 8. Rental and Owner Occupancy By Race and Ethnicity



*Latinos may be of any race

Figure 9. Gross Rent By Race and Ethnicity



*Latinos may be of any race

Table 8. Gross Rent by Race and Ethnicity

	APA	White	Black	Nat. Am	Other	Latino*
less than $200	21	1,525	500	9	68	122
$200 to $299	47	1,577	374	9	36	105
$300 to $499	314	6,233	954	33	167	507
$500 to $749	682	6,128	1,371	55	155	500
$750 to $999	433	2,953	423	0	33	139
$1,000 or more	158	2,475	152	9	52	149
No cash rent	14	410	60	0	5	32

*Latinos may be of any race